

Friday | **February 10, 2023** | 7:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | AHL Game 720 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester, CW Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (21-17-2-1) get back to work tonight following the AHL All-Star break as they host the defending Eastern Conference champion Springfield Thunderbirds (23-17-1-4) at The Blue Cross Arena. All the action will be carried live on The Fan Rochester as well as AHLTV. The 7:05 p.m. matchup will also be televised live locally on CW Rochester.

Tonight is just the 13th meeting between the Amerks and Thunderbirds over the last six seasons. Rochester has eight wins since the start of the 2016-17 campaign. The two teams will close out their season-series later this month when the Amerks make their only trip to the MassMutual Center on Feb. 25.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT AGAINST SPRINGFIELD

The two clubs have split the season-series in each of the last three seasons with each team posting one win as well as a loss. The Amerks, however, are 5-0-0-0 in their last five meetings on home ice against Springfield dating back to the start of the 2016-17 campaign.

Over that same time span, there have been six one-goal games, four two-goal games and a pair of seven-plus goal outings over the previous 12 contests between Springfield and Rochester.

Rochester's five-game home win streak against the Thunderbirds, who are currently riding an eight-game win streak of their own, is the longest against any single opponent within the friendly confines of The Blue Cross Arena.

LAST TIME OUT

Jeremy Davies capped a back-and-forth high-scoring affair less than a minute into overtime to propel the Amerks to a 5-4 victory over the Belleville Senators last Saturday at CAA Arena.

Forward **Michael Mersch** celebrated his 500th career AHL game in a big way, scoring twice while **Sean Malone** also notched a multi-point effort by chipping in two assists. **Isak Rosen** (1+1) and **Jiri Kulich** (1+0) both scored for the second time in as many games.

Goaltender **Michael Houser** (4-5-0) snapped his four-game skid as he made 23 saves in his first-ever start against Belleville.

SUBBAN SHOULDERING THE WORKLOAD

After suffering a defeat in his season-debut on Nov. 18, Subban has gone 10-6-1 since over his last 17 starts, including seven straight wins between Dec. 10 to Jan. 14. The seven-game win streak was the longest of his pro career and the third-longest streak among all AHL goaltenders behind Toronto's Joseph Woll and Calgary's Dustin Wolf.

He was the first Amerks goaltender to post seven straight wins since Jonas Johansson won nine consecutive contests during the 2019-20 campaign.

Subban had arguably his best performance of the season during a 75-save weekend in Rochester's two-game sweep over the Charlotte Checkers in mid-December. A night after stopping a regular-season career-high 45 saves, Subban was flawless in a 30-save shutout on Dec. 17, his first in the AHL since April 8, 2017, with the Providence Bruins.

Subban, who picked up his 100th career win in the 5-4 overtime victory over Utica on Dec. 28, has topped the 40-save mark three times in his last 13 starts and is currently tied for 23rd amongst all netminders with 10 wins.

2022-23 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Lukas Rousek	41	10	19	29	-3	16
Brandon Biro	31	9	20	29	-3	10
Linus Weissbach	41	13	15	28	-12	37
Brett Murray	40	14	12	26	-10	29
Michael Mersch	30	9	16	25	2	14

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Eric Comrie*	3	1-2-0	79	.898	3.03
Malcolm Subban	18	10-7-1	506	.902	3.05
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen*	9	6-3-0	238	.898	3.07
Michael Houser	11	4-5-0	265	.892	3.25

*=Currently on recall with Buffalo (NHL)

^ = Currently reassigned to Cincinnati (ECHL)

2022-23 THUNDERBIRDS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Matthew Highmore	45	11	33	44	-4	20
Martin Frk	40	15	24	39	-5	42
Will Bitten	38	14	15	29	5	28
Brady Lye	45	5	22	27	-2	38
Hugh McGing	44	10	13	23	-5	48

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Joel Hofer	30	16-10-4	851	.917	2.57
Vadim Zherenko	16	7-7-1	493	.923	2.71

* = Currently on recall with STL

HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Springfield Thunderbirds Rochester Americans

23-17-1-4	Overall Record	21-17-2-1
11-9-1-3	Home Record	11-9-1-0
12-8-0-1	Road Record	10-8-1-1
8-2-0-0	Last 10 Games	3-6-1-0
17-4-1-4	Record When Scoring First	13-7-1-1
3.09 (T-16th)	Goals-For Per Game	3.15 (15th)
2.87 (8th)	Goals-Against Per Game	3.44 (25th)
23.0% (7th)	Power-Play	19.9% (15th)
81.0% (14th)	Penalty Kill	77.1% (26th)
5-4 OTW vs. BRI	Last Game	5-4 OTW @ BEL
Feb. 17 @ PRO	Next Game	Feb. 11 @ SYR



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BIRO PILING UP THE POINTS

Despite missing six games due to injury, third-year forward **Brandon Biro** has blazed his way atop the team's scoring lead following a productive December in which he led the team with 16 points (6+10) in 10 games. He recorded multi-point efforts in seven of his 10 appearances, including six straight between Dec. 9 and Dec. 30 before closing out the month with an assist in the 3-2 win in Toronto.

Biro, who made his NHL debut with the Buffalo Sabres last season, currently paces the Amerks in assists (20) and points (29) through 31 games and his recent seven-game point streak to close out the 2022 calendar year was the longest of his career.

Dating back to last season, Biro has totaled 70 points on 21 goals and 49 assists over his last 79 games and hasn't gone more than six games without a point since Nov. 27, 2021.

JOBST HAVING A CAREER YEAR

Mason Jobst has certainly made the most of his second opportunity with the Amerks as the fourth-year pro is in the process of assembling a career-year.

Through 35 games this season, the Speedway, Indiana, native has already established career-highs in all offensive categories, including goals (7), assists (13) and points (20).

With an assist in last Saturday's overtime win in Belleville, Jobst reached the 20-point mark for the first time in his pro career, becoming the ninth different Amerk to eclipse the mark.

Since the turn of the New Year, Jobst has amassed four goals and seven points over his previous nine games, including his first career hat trick in the 7-5 loss to the first-place Toronto Marlies back on Jan. 14. Jobst single-handedly outscored Toronto in the second period with back-to-back goals before netting what was the go-ahead goal in the third period.

Jobst has totaled 33 points (11+12) over 61 career games with the Amerks dating back to last season.

PROWESS ON THE BLUELINE

Entering the Jan. 19 game against Laval, **Ethan Prow** was the only Amerks defenseman to appear in every game this season. Overall, he has skated in 110 of the 116 games dating back to the start of the 2021-22 campaign.

Through 40 games this season, Prow is tied for 17th in scoring amongst all AHL defensemen while his 20 assists are tied for also 17th in the league. This season marks the fourth straight in which the veteran defenseman has reached the 20-assist mark and the fifth consecutive year with 20 or more points, which includes an abbreviated campaign overseas in 2020-21.

The seventh-year veteran has posted 13 points (2+11) in his last 15 outings dating back to Dec. 28 and comes into tonight with five assists over his last five games.

He leads all Amerks defensemen with four multi-point outings, including a two-goal effort in the 4-3 win at Syracuse back on Jan. 7.

Prow has never gone more than five games all season without a point

AMERKS-THUNDERBIRDS 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
JJ Peterka	2	1	2	3	0	0
Brandon Biro	2	0	2	2	0	-2
Mason Jobst	1	0	2	2	0	1
Sean Malone	1	1	0	1	0	0

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	1-0-0	2	.920	1.85
Michael Houser	1	0-1-0	5	.839	5.48

SPRINGFIELD

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Matthew Peca	2	3	0	3	0	2
Sam Anas	2	1	2	3	0	1
Will Bitten	2	1	1	2	0	2
Steven Santini	2	0	2	2	0	-1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Joel Hofer	2	1-0-1	5	.922	2.40

2021-22 GAME-BY-GAME BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Jan. 1	L	5-3	30-31	1-4	3-5
Apr. 19	SOW	3-2	35-25	0-3	2-2

SERIES NOTABLES

So far this season, Rochester have used five different goaltenders compared to Springfield having two. It marks the third straight season that the Amerks have used at least five different goaltenders.

Springfield defenseman Griffin Luce spent the 2020-21 season with the Amerks after signing a PTO on Feb. 1, 2021. The Williamsville, New York, native split the campaign between the Amerks and Rapid City Rush (ECHL), tallying five points (2+3) in a combined 34 games.

Rochester blueliner Ethan Prow spent the 2019-20 campaign with Springfield prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 42 games with the Thunderbirds, Prow led all defensemen with nine goals and .76 points-per-game in 42 games while his 32 points and 27 assists were second and third, respectively.

Amerks defenseman Chase Priskie had a brief stint with Springfield to close out his rookie campaign in 2019-20. After playing most of the season in Charlotte, Priskie joined the Thunderbirds for five games, scoring two goals and adding two assists. He was also a teammate of Prow during his time in Springfield.

Tonight marks the 13 different club Rochester has faced this season. With the exception of the Hershey Bears, the Amerks will have faced all their opponents they will face during the 2022-23 campaign.



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